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ABSTRACT

To gather information on the experiences and expectations of students enrolled in summer courses, the Trumbull Campus of Kent State University, in Ohio, conducted a survey of 580 students enrolled during summer 1993. The survey gathered data on students' academic rank and major, reasons for taking summer classes, and satisfaction with campus services. Study findings, based on completed surveys received from 207 students, included the following: (1) 38% of the students were freshmen, 31% were sophomores, and 23% were upper division students; (2) the most frequent major among the summer students was nursing; (3) the most frequently indicated reason for taking summer course work was to make progress toward a degree program, cited by 122 students; (4) only 85 of the students indicated that they had seen an academic advisor prior to registering; (5) students indicated some dissatisfaction with the courses available in the summer, with suggestions including more variety of class times, additional instructors, more night classes, and additional classes that would give students a head start on the fall quarter; (6) while campus services received excellent to good ratings overall, some students cited the need to adequately train summer staff, provide child care services, establish a payment plan for summer students, and establish an exclusive registration time for students taking summer classes; and (7) overall, 40% rated their classroom experience and 41% the helpfulness of staff as excellent. Student comments are appended. (TGI)

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ED 388 322

SUMMER 1993 SURVEY OF STUDENTS

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SUMMER SESSIONS

This is a study of the experiences of students taking summer courses at Kent Trumbull. The investigation's purpose is to identify specific student expectations, i.e., objectives of summer course work; satisfaction with campus services, people and environment; and impressions of the overall experience. Also addressed are areas of campus services and environment that students feel need improvement. This information will be used to provide specific direction for Kent Trumbull's services, operations and programs.

An eight item survey was developed to extract information about the following areas:

1. Academic rank
2. Academic major
3. Course selection
4. Reason(s) for taking summer classes
5. Time of decision to register
6. Consultation with an academic advisor
7. Rating services
   a. registration process
   b. helpfulness of the staff
   c. classroom experience
   d. course content
   e. teaching quality
   f. course selection and time preferences
8. Additional comments and suggestions for improvement of summer sessions

Surveys were mailed to each of the 580 students attending one or more of the summer 1993 sessions. A total of 207 or 36% returned completed surveys. Figure (1) illustrates the class rank distribution of students taking summer classes. The largest portion of students taking classes in the summer were freshmen (38%) and sophomores with (31%). Upper division students (junior and seniors)

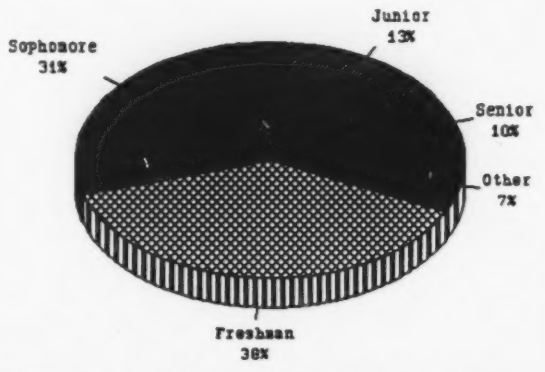

Figure 1. *Class rank of students attending summer 93 sessions*

accounted for (13%) and (10%) of the summer student population. The top ten majors of summer students responding to the survey is shown in figure (2). Nursing was identified as being the most frequent major. Reported reasons for taking summer classes are displayed in Figure (3). Though a more complete list of reasons for choosing to take summer classes can be found on page (8), responses fell into several broad categories. The most frequently indicated reason for taking summer course work was to make progress toward a degree program. One hundred twenty-two students indicated

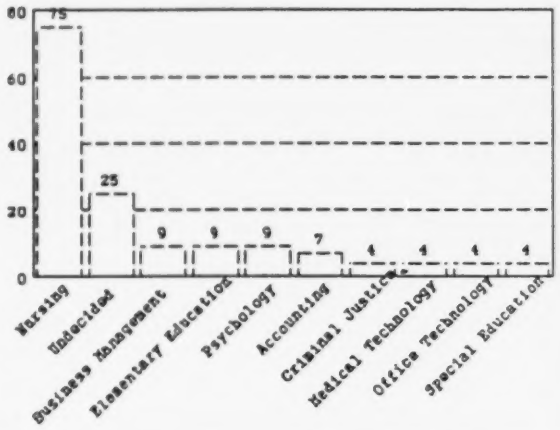

Figure 2. *Top Ten Majors Reported By Students Taking Summer 1993 Classes*

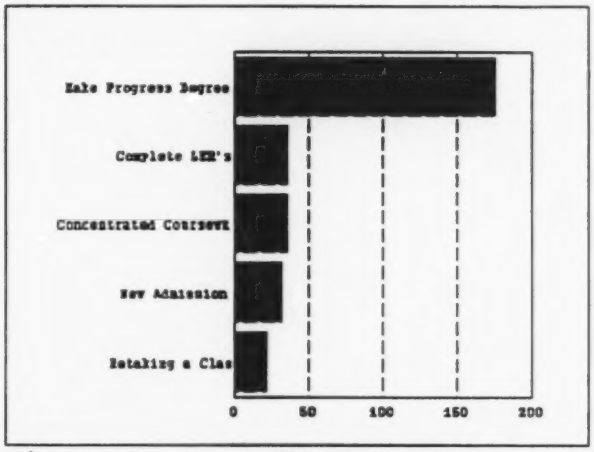

Figure 3. *Summer 93 student's reasons for attending summer sessions*

wanting to make additional progress toward their degree program. Twenty-two students responded that they were new admissions and wanted to get a head start on their degree requirements. Twelve students reported wanting to complete Liberal Education requirements.

Ten students said they were retaking a class. And, nine students wanted to take advantage of the concentrated course work the summer sessions offer.

Access to Advising

Summer students were asked if they consulted with an academic advisor before registering: 85 said "Yes" and 122 indicated they did not see an advisor

before scheduling summer classes. The implication is that a large percentage of students taking summer classes either do not have access to an advisor, or do not choose to consult with an advisor. Summer session students were asked to give their overall ratings of the campus environment and services the responses are displayed in Figure (4). These overall ratings reveal no apparent areas of services which need to be specifically addressed. Figure (5) depicts student responses to a survey inquiry asking for perceptions of needed service improvements. This inquiry was made in an attempt to identify indicators of student dissatisfaction as well as solicit opinions and suggestions for enhancing campus programs, services and environment. Complete student comments on identified areas of service that need improvement begin on page (9). The responses fell into two large categories course offerings and student services. Anticipating that student comments about course availability would be a major concern students were asked specifically to rate summer course availability. Figure (6) displays the responses to the request for student ratings of the availability of summer courses. As Figure (6) shows the range of student ratings of course

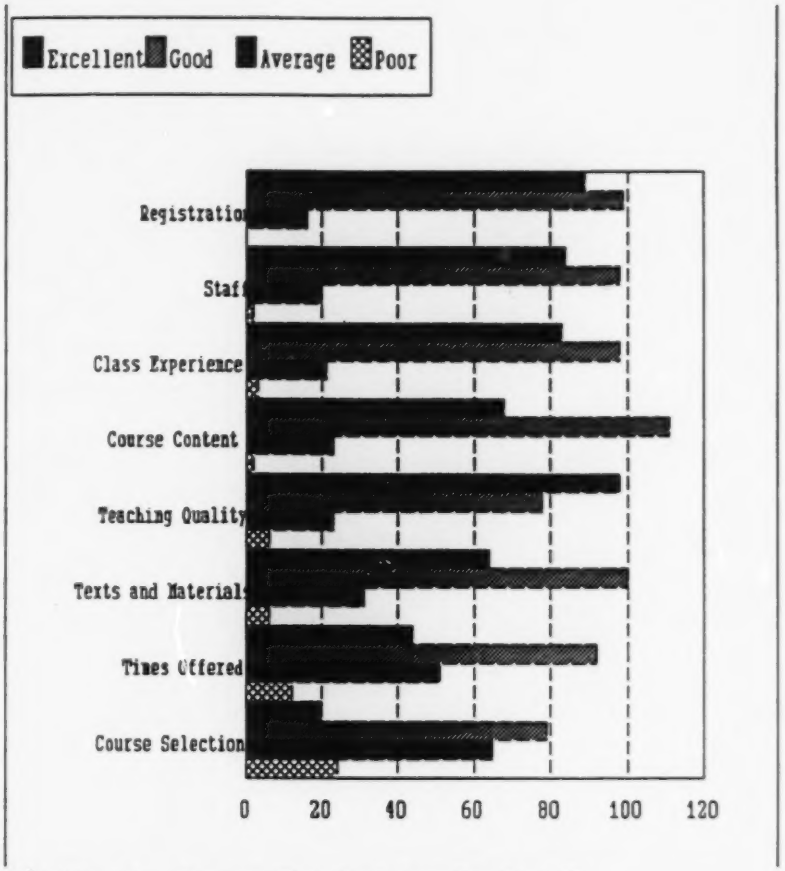

Figure 4. *Summer 93 student's overall ratings of campus programs, services and environments*

availability seem to indicate some dissatisfaction. However, these ratings do not reveal any wide spread dissatisfaction but rather tell us that we didn't offer all the courses students wanted at all the times they wanted.

The category of student comments pertaining to course offerings includes both general and specific suggestions (a complete list of comments begin on page 12). Below are specific courses students suggested be offered in the summer.

Nutrition
Oceanography
Art Experience
Children's Literature
Accounting
Additional Psychology courses and sections
Additional Nursing courses and courses required for Nursing majors

An overwhelming response from students was that they wanted more upper division courses in Criminal Justice, Business, Education, Psychology, Art. In general a variety of selected upper division courses that would ease the required commuting to complete baccalaureate degrees.

Below are some additional comments in the category of course availability:

More variety of class times
Additional instructors
More night classes in the summer
Additional classes that would give students a head start on the fall
i.e., Intro courses and LER's
Computer classes during the day
A Master's degree program in Business

In the category of student suggestions and comments relating to student service, comments were concerned with a number of areas including:

a. Staff - Several students commented on the need for staff training; encountering staff that could not answer questions.
b. General - Child care was identified as a suggested service
c. Post instructions in computer labs
d. A payment plan for summer fees
e. Better notification of classroom assignments
f. A more easily read campus directory and floor plan
g. Telephone registration
h. An exclusive registration time for students taking summer classes
i. Students want to make all money and loan transactions at the campus
j. Advisors should only advise in <u>their</u> degree areas
k. Book buy-back should occur earlier (the last day of classes)
l. Tutoring- Extended skill center hours in the summer
m. Security - Security should be here and available when classes are in session.
n. More lighting in the parking lot
o. Library - Library is to noisy, too many young children running

around.
p. The library and skill center needs better organization.

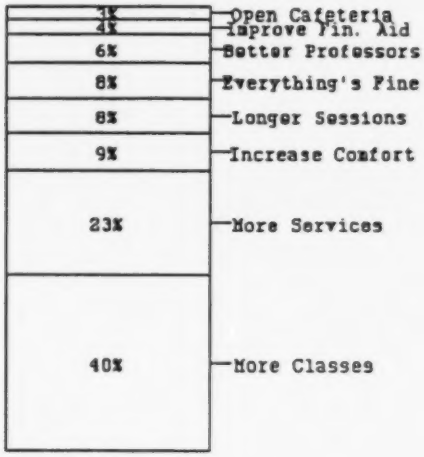

Figure 5. *Student identified areas of campus services needing improvement*

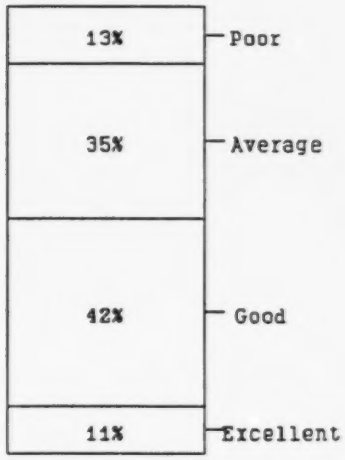

Figure 6. *Summer 93 student rating of the availability of courses*

The relatively few responses generated by the question "What don't you like about the campus?" illustrated in Figure (7) is evidence to the general overall satisfaction of students taking summer classes. That is not to say that the comments by students who do identify areas of campus operations should be ignored because their number is small. We should make the assumption that any student comment has a greater impact than what the number of students commenting may indicate and explore the activities and conditions mentioned. We know that for a variety of reasons, students do not always state their opinions. Using the comments we do receive, no matter how few, as indicators of areas that should

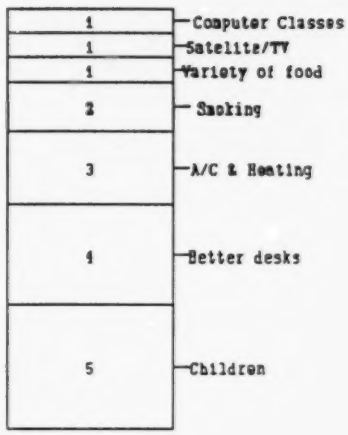

Figure 7. *What summer 93 students didn't like*

be reviewed, can help us improve our response to students. With that in mind, the following are responses to "What don't you like about the campus?"

- Children on campus: Several students responded that they were distracted by unattended children on campus. During summer sessions there are often children of students on campus. Often these children are unattended while their parent(s) are in class. Providing simple activities for the children of students during summer sessions would be a strategy for addressing the issue of unattended children.

- Desks: It is no secret that the normal classroom desk was primarily designed for function not comfort. Though we have accepted this general discomfort as part of the classroom experience we should always look at opportunities to explore other options in classroom furniture.

In general we should continue our efforts to establish and maintain a comfortable campus environment including temperature, furniture etc. All the elements that make up a comfortable, pleasant environment.

- Several students made comments about the desire to have cable/satellite television in the student union.
- Students commented on the desire to have more of a variety of food available during the summer. Summer sessions have not had enrollments large enough to support having an open cafeteria. Though we anticipate increases in our summer enrollments, until they reach a level that would support the cafeteria remaining open during the summer, we should explore other options such as limited cafeteria hours and increasing the variety of food in vending machines.

(more complete comments are located on page 16).

Figures 8,9 and 10 illustrate student responses to specific aspects of their Summer session experience. Students responded to questions asking ratings of the summer class schedule, the helpfulness of staff and the quality of the classroom experience. An additional question asked students about the quality of teaching they experienced during the summer. The answers tell us that students who take summer classes are generally satisfied with their experiences on the campus and in the classroom.

These issues, as well as those identified by other questions in the survey of summer students, afford us a direction in which to address student concerns and identified issues. As always, it is our response to these indicators that will improve the campus academic programs, environment and services.

Figure 9. *Student satisfaction with the summer class schedule*

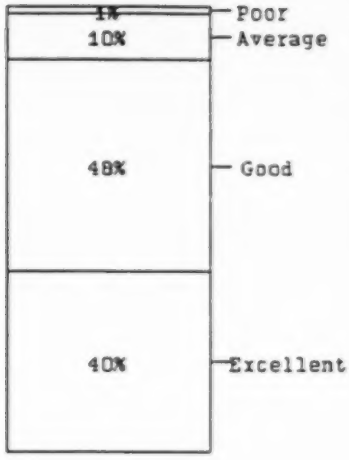

Figure 8. *Student ratings of classroom experience*

Figure 10. *Student perception of the helpfulness of staff*

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Additional Reasons for Taking Summer Classes

To complete requirements towards degree or to advance in class rank. (11)

Hours toward Certification (4)

Preferred shorter semester and wanted to lighten their fall load. (8)

In the A. E. P. program. (5)

In the P. I. C. program. (2)

Taking the integrated workshops for Tech Prep teachers. (7)

Additional Comments:

I wanted to raise my GPA.

I am currently pregnant, and am trying not to fall behind in my curriculum.

I wanted a smaller class to give my speeches to.

$200 and course credit.

Graduate level plus stipend.

For apprenticeship.

Avoid night classes in the fall since I'm here all day.

Transferred from YSU, anxious to see what Kent was like.

Because I'm only going part-time.

I am a returning student.

To improve my insight, and better prepare myself as an educator.

My fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, encouraged me.

It is a lot easier to let you people take care of my correspondence with Kent.

I only needed one more hour to be a sophomore; I needed six hours to get a full paycheck from my job here; I felt speech would be easier in the summer; and I didn't want a certain professor for one of my classes.

Service Comments:

Day-care or evening care for children of students. A small fee could be charged (added) to class fee for students that need to have small children looked after. The last classes I took - half the students (female) needed or wanted some type of day-care (or evening care) for their children.

The class I took was at night. I thought the parking lot was scary at times. Needs more lighting.

Pretest (precollege) for math etc. Some people are just poor test takers, but they know the material. Have to spend money for no credit. You need to notify us when to schedule for nest time.

Students should be able to sell there books back on the last day of class. A lot of the students live a half an hour away or more.

Need an easy to read directory and floor plan of the building.

Maybe make registration for summer classes only; before allowing those students registering for the fall (different dates for registration). I didn't expect to wait in line for just one class.

Have the staff remember that they are here to serve us, and stop lying about the teacher job market. There are no teaching jobs.

I was never sent notification to which classroom my class was in, I went there and couldn't find the class.

Summer II ends 8-7, Summer III ends 8-21, but the the last book buy back is 8-30 and 8-31, after fall classes have started. Please consider moving the book buy back up a few days earlier.

Campus seemed closed down even for summer term.

A student usually needs more outside tutoring if a summer math is taken. I desperately needed the skills center four evenings a week, but it was only open for two. I'm sure the other students would benefit from this as well.

Offer a phone registration like Kent Campus.

Send out pamphlets on courses, when it is time to register, etc.

I think it would be more helpful if the financial aid was explained better to the students, and reminders were sent.

We should be able to transact all our money and loan papers to any branch, I had to run for three different offices.

Post operation instructions in the computer labs.

Library too noisy - summer youth program too distracting. Summer course work is intense and students should be able to use the library for academics, with out distractions.

Advisors should advise for the degree they have, and not a math advisor advising an English major.

Make computer labs available to to students on Saturdays, this would give students who work more time to complete their homework.

To enroll via phone with charge card.

The Warren staff was more concerned with the "mess" that students made, than the learning process. They complained that foot prints were being tracked in the hall, but did not provide a mat to wipe our feet on.

The library and skills center should be better organized. I needed to do research papers and could not find what I needed. When I asked for help in the library I was told, "if you can't find it, it must be out" When I needed help in the Skill Center everyone acted liked they weren't sure what info they had or how to transfer it to a disk.

People who work in registration should have a representative there at all times to answer students' questions. Instead of telling students "I don't know' or "They are in a meeting at this time, come back later."

Make sure all office workers know all procedures. They all seem to know bits and pieces of information. One of them told me I didn't need to fill out a financial need analysis form for a scholarship, which made me ineligible. I had a 4.0 average with fifteen credits, and I feel like I was severely ripped off.

I strongly believe in institutions having orientation for personnel as to how they must attend and respond to those seeking services or information. I encountered a situation with my incoming schedule that makes me wonder if the AEP program is needing more attention than it is getting.

The people in Student Affairs could be more friendly, and explain things a little more clearly.

Allow longer time for registration.

If you're not going to have security available for the classes that are scheduled late

perhaps you should reschedule those classes.

Better and more info on financial aid, and a faster process.

The only problem I have had at KSU is that Barb Brooks advised and discouraged me from taking Chemistry because it had a lot of Algebra. I took it anyway and received an 'A; I had the top grade in the class. In my opinion there was very little Algebra involved, just simple math calculations.

Comments

Offer More Classes Comments:

I found that some students were having difficulty with scheduling because of LER overlap on dates and times.

During the course of conversation with many of the participants of this course, it was agreed that if Kent State offered a Master's degree program at this regional campus, and promoted it well, it would be well recieved by prospective candidates. For many of us Kent is too far to travel.

Offer more classes at more times. I'd like to see Oceanography, Children's Literature, and Art Experience offered in the daytime.

Have computer classes during the day.

Increase the number of daytime course offerings, and the number of courses available.

Offer more summer classes, there were only two I could take with my ranking. Most of them I had taken my first year, or I wasn't prepared for the next classes.

Offer more convenient times especially during the day hours for courses so that working students could actually work while attending school.

Need a variety of intro courses. There were only two classes I could take, the others had prerequisites, and they were both at the same time.

I feel that more classes should be offered in the summer. I would have liked to to take more classes than abnormal psychology. I had to schedule around my job.

Need more classes available at night. Need to have more classes brought down from main campus for us "poor victimized" working people who cannot qualify for financial aid or make a 3.0 or above. I was not awarded a scholarship based on financial need.

Try to offer classes in the afternoon and evening so people can choose and fit it better

into their schedule.

I do not like taking evening classes. I had no choice this fall. I think you should at least offer the class in the day also.

Overall I think the summer program is very satisfying. The only recommendation I would like to see occur is the implementation of more varied classes especially in special education.

Some classes (Chemistry & Nutrition) only offered certain semesters. Many students need to fill requirements and are put on waiting lists because the class fills up so fast. They should be offered more frequently. This complaint is common to many people in the nursing program.

If this campus would offer more classes more of the time, instead of offering them one semester and not the next, I would take more classes here.

Offer more classes that would help get a head start for the fall, such as beginning language classes.

Offer a grater variety of courses and try to know who the professor will be sooner so that students can consult with them concerning the course.

Sometimes a variety isn't available for Nutrition, an "arranged" notation on a schedule is too vague to schedule other classes and coordinate a schedule. If certain majors (ex. nursing) is a mandatory % of the student load, all chemistries, nutrition, and bilges should be offered every semester. i want to take Organic Chemistry 10052 this fall because I've taken Fundamentals 10050 during summer III. Now I have to wait until spring.

Offer more courses every semester, even in the summer.

Offer more nursing classes besides just chemistry.

Offer a graduate level program at this campus. In my class of 26, 9 said they would take advantage of such a program.

Make classes available during the night and the day. ex. intuitive calculus summer III.

More science and nursing classes in the summer so you don't have to drive to main campus for just one class.

I've been told there is a waiting list for anatomy/physiology; it would be helpful to have one scheduled for the summer.

The times during the year that accounting 3, 4 Tax and Cost are too rigid. All four of

these classes need to be offered both in the fall and the spring with a day option as well as a night option. Offering a Tax and Cost course in the summer would also help.

I recommend that there are sufficient amount of classes offered to complete a two year course in said two years with out having to petition to get classes added. There is no way I can complete this program in the time span it should take. I need four classes (15 credits), there are only two classes (8 credits) being offered in fall '93.

Offer more classes, more variability with class time, and more professors teaching the class.

Offer Criminal Justice courses at Trumbull Campus which I prefer to main campus.

Offering more classes during the summer would be helpful, and letting non-nursing students sign up for required courses needed so that you know what your schedule is going to be without waiting until the last minute.

More technology classes on Saturday.

Have more classes to offer for Junior and Senior students.

I believe you would see an increase in summer enrollment if you would bring down more upper-division classes and also a foreign language.

More of the classes that are offered in the spring and fall so we can further our degree and not take so many classes in the spring or fall.

The addition of an occupational therapy assistant course.

I hope you offer Basic Microbiology next semester, as I was not able to take it this semester. Nutrition was not a summer option, but enough students requested it through the suggestion box and you added it. Thank You!! This is a great campus!

More graduate level workshops, computer for credit.

Summer Session Longer Comments:

I recommend not overlapping two popular nursing required classes by 55 minutes, as you did with nutrition and child psychology this summer. I was forced to take nutrition at Salem campus, but as I was told by Dr. Smith "we can't please everyone all of the time."

I realize summer courses are short and educators have a great deal to cram in a short period of time, however, I feel that if the student isn't given all the information needed, the course can be difficult to pass.

To have longer terms for the class, so we could learn more for the money we pay.

At times the the workload is too much. It's difficult reading and studying for tests when there's too much material, especially if you have other classes, or if you work.

My major, Office Technology, rarely offers any courses in the summer. Although it is difficult to offer typing etc. in five weeks, it would be helpful if classes like Office Management etc. were offered in five or ten week sessions of summer school.

Have the difficult courses run for ten weeks of the summer semester. Let the AEP students get their books before the first day of class.

I would rather have one long summer semester than five week semesters like I and III. The pace in a five week course is sometimes too fast.

Organic chemistry should be an eight week course instead of five.

I wish the summer course that I took would have been longer so I could learn more.

Comfort Comments:

Fewer children in the halls (non-students), designated study areas with black boards, lower tuition and book costs.

Working air conditioner.

Comfort of couches and chairs in a carpeted area.

Higher level computer classes during day hours; CATV/satellite system for Uncle Willy's TV, so we can watch something besides 4 UHF channels.

Better chairs in classroom.

Campus needs a more comfortable lounge and study area.

Teaching Comments:

I was very disappointed not to have an instructor the first day of child psych. class. My time and money is too valuable for Kent Trumbull to have contracted a professor for an 8 PM class and have the students show up at 8AM. An apology would be in order.

I wish there was a bio-sheet on the professors instead of a gamble on who get based on the time you need the class. RC, Staff, or a last name tells me nothing.

Try to make the harder courses as easy as possible by having the professors come down to the students' level.

The teacher of this course should have been one that already it to teenagers!

Mrs. Urchek is an excellent math teacher.

Class objectives are grading procedure should be required of all teachers! Spell student's names correctly.

Professors should not make tests so hard that they have to curve so much.

Financial aid Comments:

Offer more scholarships for summer school.

I'd like to be able to pay in payments during the summer rather than one lump sum.

Lower the prices for the summer classes. You could give a discount for students who attended Kent Trumbull full-time, or who have a 3.00 GPA.

Well, I know there is nothing the school can do, but financial aid for the students that can not get help.